



Event Guidelines

Overview of Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) & City Council Sustainability Focus

Hendersonville's City Council recognizes sustainability as essential to preserving the health and vitality of our community for future generations. As a result, the City has adopted sustainability as a core value as stated in Resolution R-21-53.

The Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) was established in 2015 to serve in a dual role:

1. **Advisory** – offering guidance to City Council on environmental policy, and
2. **Outreach** – building public awareness and encouraging citizen engagement in sustainability initiatives.

Hendo Earth Fest (HEF) Overview & Purpose

As part of its educational and outreach mission, the **ESB annually plans, finances, and manages Hendo Earth Fest (HEF)**—a vibrant community celebration of environmental stewardship.

HEF is a **family-focused event** that brings together local and regional environmental partners to provide **interactive demonstrations and hands-on activities**. The goal is to inspire residents of all ages to learn about sustainable practices and take actionable steps to protect our Western North Carolina environment and natural resources.

HEF Mission Statement

To **educate, renew, and expand action** in support of protecting the environment and natural resources of Western North Carolina.

HEF Purpose

The purpose of HEF is to:

- Promote **environmental education** and **sustainable practices** for all ages
- Inspire **individual and collective action** to protect the planet
- Strengthen connections with **local and regional environmental allies** through community participation

Provide **hands-on experiences** that engage and empower residents to make environmentally responsible choices

Subcommittee Roles and Responsibilities

Subcommittee member roles include the following:

- **Chair, ESB member**
- **Vice Chair**
- **Sustainability Manager, City of Hendersonville employee**
- **Volunteer Coordinator**
- **Tent Coordinator , ESB member**
- **Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator**
- **Musician/Entertainment Coordinator**
- **Marketing Coordinator**
- **Bicycle Coordinator**
- **EV Car Show Coordinator**

There must be at least three ESB members as part of the subcommittee with the Chair and Tent Coordinator roles required to be filled by an ESB member.

Chair

- **ESB appoints the Chair and Vice Chair for the upcoming year's HEF by the adjournment of the August Environmental Sustainability Board meeting**
- **Responsibilities:**
 - Ensures HEF is in compliance with the Guidelines in this document.
 - Submits drafted Subcommittee agendas to Sustainability Manager at least three business days in advance of meeting for Sustainability Manager to post on the City's webpage.
 - Completes or appoints a note keeper to take meeting minutes during HEF subcommittee meetings. Chair or appointed note keeper shall submit minutes to Sustainability Manager no later than 4 days after meeting.
 - Creates action plan and timeline for EarthFest planning
 - Key point-of-contact for EarthFest (should cc Vice Chair on any communications to ensure nothing is missed)
 - Routes any questions/requests to the appropriate subcommittee member
 - Primary point-of-contact for the City Special Events Committee, Fire Department, and Police Department

- Prepares operation manual with all pertinent documents printed and accessible at ESB booth for organizer/volunteer reference- schedules, layout, permits etc
 - Files and signs off on permits/plans, in conjunction with the Sustainability Manager
 - Must be in attendance and reachable during the entire EarthFest event, including during set-up and breakdown (can coordinate breaks with the Chair and Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator)
 - Will act as a “floater” during the event
 - Must be reachable via cell phone
 - Oversees layout of event, including checks for proper implementation of barricades during event set-up, placement of garbage/recycling, vendor locations, etc.
 - Back-up point-of-contact for any subcommittee member the day of
 - Oversees the other committee members and ensures they are in compliance for planning and any action plan responsibilities
- **Vice Chair**
 - Ensures the Chair is in compliance with the action plan and that all permits have been filed appropriately and ahead of any deadlines
 - Assists in ensuring EarthFest is in compliance with the Guidelines in this document
 - Assists in creation of action plan and timeline for EarthFest planning
 - Secondary point-of-contact for EarthFest (should be cc'd by Chair on any communications to ensure nothing is missed)
 - Must be in attendance and reachable during the entire EarthFest event, including during set-up and breakdown (can coordinate breaks with the Chair and Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator)
 - Will act as a “floater” during the event
 - Must be reachable via cell phone
 - Oversees layout of event, including checks for proper implementation of barricades during event set-up, placement of garbage/recycling, vendor locations, etc.
 - Back-up point-of-contact for any subcommittee member the day of
 - Assists in overseeing the other committee members and ensures they are in compliance for planning and any action plan responsibilities
- **Sustainability Manager, City of Hendersonville staff member**
 - Submits and manages the Special Events Permit and relays pertinent related information to Subcommittee Members.
 - Submits and manages all other required permits such as use of the Henderson County Visitor Center parking lot and stage. Sustainability Manager is also responsible for reserving use of Henderson County Visitor Center restrooms if needed.
 - Ensures all branding and materials are in alignment with the ESB's mission

- Ensures all branding and materials adhere to the same aesthetic as previous years' promotions; if changes are needed a redesign must be brought to the subcommittee
 - Ensures all branding and materials are in alignment with the ESB's mission
 - Submits all Subcommittee requests and needs to appropriate City staff and communicates back to the Subcommittee.
- **Volunteer Coordinator**
 - Must be in attendance and reachable during the entire EarthFest event, including during set-up and breakdown (can coordinate breaks with the ESB Tent Coordinator)
 - Works closely with the ESB Tent Coordinator(s) because of shared tent space
 - This can be a co-run position so that two people can split up the responsibilities of planning ahead and coordinating the day of
 - If co-run, it is essential that all volunteer information and materials are handed off between shifts
 - Helps recruit volunteers for the ESB (or specifically EarthFest) throughout the year
 - Reaches out to the ESB volunteer list to recruit volunteers specifically for Earthfest
 - Maintains a spreadsheet of volunteers for the event and their contact information
 - Creates and distributes the volunteer schedule ahead of the festival
 - Sets up the volunteer table/sign-in at the ESB tent
 - Tracks volunteer sign-ins at the ESB tent via a sign-in sheet
 - Prepares a volunteer safety and information briefing
 - Briefs volunteers on safety and their responsibilities when they sign in
 - Provides any equipment volunteers need day-of (safety vests, sunscreen, etc.)
 - Ensures any loaned equipment is returned by volunteers when they sign out
 - Responsible for breaking down and packing out any volunteer materials, and assisting the ESB Tent Coordinator with breaking down and packing up the tent and other booth materials
 - Creates and shares a survey with volunteers after the event asking for their feedback
 - **ESB Information Tent Coordinator**
 - Must be in attendance and reachable during the entire EarthFest event, including during set-up and breakdown (can coordinate breaks with the Volunteer Coordinator)
 - Works closely with the Volunteer Coordinator(s) because of shared tent space

- This can be a co-run position so that two people can split up the responsibilities of planning ahead and coordinating the day of
 - If co-run, it is essential that all information and materials are handed off between shifts
- Sets up the tent the day of Earthfest and determines booth lay out
 - Coordinate with Volunteer Coordinator to ensure a table is designated for volunteer information and materials
- Ensures appropriate event informational materials are present to answer visitor questions/needs. This includes but is not limited to:
 - A copy of the full exhibitor/vendor layout
 - Information on the ESB
- Ensures a first aid kit is present at the tent.
- Plans activities/displays that align with the ESB's mission for the booth, and is responsible for setting these up
 - *Note- historically vendors/exhibitors have had plenty of kid-focused activities, so the ESB booth should NOT have a kid focus for this event*
 - This includes creating and obtaining any needed materials ahead
 - Provide basic information about the ESB
 - Provide information if attendees would like to sign up to volunteer with the ESB in the future
 - Provide basic information about EarthFest (the mission, where the bathrooms are, etc.)
- Responsible for breaking down and packing out the ESB tent and any materials from the booth

- **Business Coordinator**

- Sponsorship outreach
 - Contacts local businesses ahead of the event to see if they would like to sponsor or donate items for the event, such as...
 - Sustainability or environment-focused giveaway items
 - Free printing of materials for flyers, etc.
 - Food or drink for volunteers
 - When conducting sponsorship outreach, if the business expresses interest in vending/exhibiting at the event, direct them to the vendor application and Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator
 - Responsible for communicating any sponsorships or donations with the EarthFest Subcommittee
 - Responsible for picking up any donations from local businesses and bringing them to EarthFest, or handing them off to the appropriate subcommittee member ahead of time
- Works with ESB member(s) involved with the ESB Green Partnership to include participating businesses in HEF
 - Coordinates ESB GP business recognition at the festival

- Contacts all businesses adjacent to the festival area once the festival plan is approved to inform them of the date/times of the festival and any associated road closures, as required by the city
 - Point-of-contact for businesses leading up to and the day of the event, must be reachable by cell phone if there are any questions or concerns
 - Creates and maintains a spreadsheet of businesses that have agreed to donate or sponsor, including the name of the business, a point of contact, contact information, and what they donated
- **Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator**
 - Responsible for organizing and managing all vendors and exhibitors leading up to and the day of the event
 - Must be in attendance and reachable during the entire set-up and breakdown of EarthFest
 - Can take a break once all vendors/exhibitors are set up and have everything they need, must return 30 minutes before the end of the festival to supervise breakdown and clean up - must communicate with Chair and Vice Chair if they will be taking a break
 - Key point-of-contact for vendors during set up and breakdown
 - Must be available via cell phone
 - Reviews Vendor/Exhibitor guidelines and amends them if needed
 - Creates the Vendor application and shares the application with the Marketing Coordinator and other subcommittee members so it can be promoted
 - Creates the Exhibitor application and shares the application with the Marketing Coordinator and other subcommittee members so it can be promoted
 - Helps recruit vendors/exhibitors that meet the guideline criteria and directs them to the vendor and exhibitor applications as needed
 - Reviews the Vendor and Exhibitor applications, and determines which vendors and exhibitors will be accepted to participate, aiming for the target make-up outlined in the guidelines
 - Coordinates with the Chair and Vice Chair to determine vendor locations in the festival area
 - Coordinates locations with all subcommittee members to ensure there are no conflicts for amenities (such as electricity), space, or entertainment
 - Includes a family-focused Kids' Zone in the layout
 - Maintains a spreadsheet of vendors/exhibitors, a point of contact, and their contact information
 - Updates and shares vendor/exhibitor rules and instructions ahead of the event
 - Creates and shares a load in/load out plan with vendors/exhibitors ahead of the event
 - Coordinates with the volunteer coordinator to plan how many volunteers will be needed to help direct traffic during the load in and load out
 - Creates plan/briefing for volunteers on their traffic responsibilities during load in/load out

- Creates and shares a map of the festival layout and vendor/exhibitor locations with the subcommittee, volunteers, vendors, and exhibitors ahead of the event
 - Will have copies on-hand the day of the event for volunteers and the ESB Tent to answer questions
 - Day-of responsibilities
 - Coordinates with Volunteer Coordinator to place volunteers at entry points for set-up, these volunteers will help direct vendors and exhibitors to their spots and then out of the festival area to park
 - Coordinates with Volunteer Coordinator to place volunteers at exit points for breakdown. These volunteers will direct any lingering attendees to clear the festival area. These volunteers will also help direct vendors and exhibitors to safely drive in and out of the festival area.
 - Once volunteers are placed for exit and entry for set up, acts as a “floater” walking the festival area checking that vendors/exhibitors are set up in the correct location and have any needed amenities (volunteers can also be used to help with this)
 - Creates and shares a survey with vendors/exhibitors after the event asking for their feedback
 - Works with a member of the ESB to communicate with food and beverage vendors on compost bins for food waste and use of biodegradable/compostable take-away products (not plastic and styrofoam) during HEF.
- **Musician/Entertainment Coordinator**
 - Responsible for booking entertainment for EarthFest
 - Must coordinate with the subcommittee to ensure there is an area (such as the Visitor Center stage) where entertainers can perform without interfering with the vendors/exhibitors for the event
 - At least 1 musical act should be booked
 - Preference for a musical act that incorporates themes of sustainability or the environment
 - Preference for local performers
 - Roaming entertainment (street performers) can be booked, as long as they can perform without interfering with the vendors/exhibitors for the event
 - Preference for acts that incorporate themes of sustainability or the environment
 - Preference for local performers
 - Stationary entertainment (face painting, etc.) can be booked, but must be coordinated with the Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator
 - Preference for entertainment that incorporates themes of sustainability or the environment
 - Preference for local entertainers
 - Must coordinate with the subcommittee for any payments to entertainers (if needed)
 - Must communicate the performance schedule with the subcommittee

- Responsible for checking in with any entertainers leading up to the event and ensuring any needs are planned for and booked (electricity, sound system, etc.)
 - Key point of contact for any entertainment
 - Key point of contact for any third-party vendors providing entertainment equipment or services, such as a sound system
 - Key point of contact for any city facility or equipment usage (for entertainment), such as the stage
- Must be in attendance and reachable during the entire set-up and breakdown of EarthFest
 - Can take a break once all entertainers are set up and have everything they need, must return 30 minutes before the end of the festival to supervise breakdown and clean up - must communicate with Chair and Vice Chair if they will be taking a break
 - Key point-of-contact for entertainers during set up and breakdown
 - Must be available via cell phone
- **Marketing Coordinator**
 - Responsible for creating or updating promotional materials and promoting HEF using various media, including but not limited to social media, press releases, the ESB webpage, flyers, signage, and radio with Sustainability Manager approval.
 - Must bring any purchase requests to the subcommittee
 - Marketing Coordinator, Sustainability Manager, or contracted marketing vendor must create or update promotional materials such as...
 - Social media graphics
 - Press releases
 - Signage
 - Flyers
 - **Sustainability Manager is required to sign off on all marketing and advertising materials before finalizing.**
 - Any radio interviews shall have the Sustainability Manager present.
 - Distributes promotional materials to subcommittee members as needed
 - Creates a digital collection of social media graphics and a “blurb” about EarthFest and stores these materials in a shared digital location
 - Coordinates with the Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator to forward the materials to the vendors/exhibitors to share on their own social media to promote EarthFest leading up to and the day of the event
 - Works with the Business Coordinator to encourage local businesses to promote the event, such as by posting on social media or allowing a flyer to be placed in their business
 - Responsible for forwarding to the Sustainability Manager to post on official social media channels, the ESB webpage, and other official communications
 - Responsible for following up with the city point of contact to ensure graphics and information have been shared
 - Responsible for following up for any re-postings that are needed

- Responsible for either photographing during EarthFest, or arranging for a photographer to be present
 - Must add any photos to a shared digital location
- Work with subcommittee to recruit volunteers for flyer and signage distribution before the festival and removal after the festival
- After EarthFest, ensures any promotional materials (flyers, signs, etc.) are removed within 5 days of HEF and either recycled or stored for re-use
- Ensures the EarthFest webpage is updated with new photos and information after the festival
- Provides Sustainability Manager photos of HEF after the festival for posting on social media.

- **Bicycle Coordinator**

- Responsible for planning a group bike ride to EarthFest, including ensuring that bike racks/parking are available at/near the event
- The Ecusta Trail should be open fully for the 2026 EarthFest, perhaps it can be used for the group ride?
- Must be present and either lead or arrange for a leader and safety team for the group bike ride on the day of EarthFest
 - Can be a one-way ride, or can be planned as a two-way ride
 - Must have a ride leader
 - Must have a safety tail to ensure no one gets left behind or has a safety issue on the ride
 - Must ensure ALL participants wear helmets
- Must coordinate with the subcommittee to ensure ample bike racks or parking is available at or near EarthFest
 - If there are not enough permanent bike racks near the finish location, responsible for arranging for temporary bike racks to be set up for the event
 - Also responsible for the breakdown and removal of any temporary bike racks after the event
- Works with the Marketing Coordinator to promote the bike ride
- Help recruit local bike organizations and vendors to participate in EarthFest (coordinate with Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator)

- **EV Car Show Coordinator**

- Responsible for planning an EV/alternative transportation showcase at EarthFest
 - Traditionally has been planned with the Blue Ridge EV Club
- Responsible for determining the location for the showcase (typically a parking lot) and including in the Special Events Permit application.
- Responsible for receiving written permission for vehicles to park there for the showcase from relevant business if not located on City property.
 - Must coordinate location with the subcommittee
 - Must determine space limitations (# of vehicles)

- Must determine eligibility criteria for participants (historically both individual vehicle owners, dealers, and EV-related businesses have all been allowed to participate)
- Create and share an EV/alternative transportation exhibition application to recruit and screen participants
 - Review applications, ensure a variety of makes and models will be represented
- Create a plan for the lay out of the EV area and share the plan with participants and the subcommittee
- Work with the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure volunteers will be available to help direct EV drivers to their places
 - EVs must follow the same set-up/breakdown timelines as the rest of the festival
- Must be present during the entire set-up and breakdown of EarthFest to lead set-up of the EV area and ensure participants have any amenities they need, and that they are set up in the correct locations
 - Once exhibitors are set up, may take a break (must inform Chair and Vice Chair if taking a break), but must still be available via cell phone the entire festival
 - Must return to the EV area at least 30 minutes before the end of the festival to assist with ushering attendees out of the area and coordinating breakdown and vehicle exits
- Responsible for creating a feedback survey and sharing it with participants after the festival

Location

HEF has historically been located on Main Street in downtown Hendersonville, but the blocks utilized have varied. The 2025 EarthFest followed the Rhythm and Brews setup footprint, but exact location will vary based on communications with the Hendersonville Special Events Committee.

Date and Time

HEF is typically the Saturday of or closest to Earth Day (April 22). ESB arrival and setup begins at 7am, and Vendor arrival and set up begins at 7:30 am. Exhibitors/vendors must arrive no later than 9 am. No vehicles will be allowed in the exhibitor area after 9:30 am.

The festival officially begins and opens to the public at 10 am. The festival ends at 3 pm, and vendors/exhibitors can begin breakdown at 3:30 pm once attendees have cleared the area. Vendors/exhibitors are expected to be packed up and out of the event space by 4:30 pm.

Vendor/Exhibitor Categories and Target Makeup

Exhibitors and vendors must have their booth focus on one of the following sustainability categories:

Categories

- Energy
 - Renewable energy
 - Energy efficiency
 - Sustainable technology
- Land Management
 - Sustainable agriculture
 - Native plants
 - Conservation
- Waste Reduction and Management
 - Recycling
 - Composting
 - Upcycling
 - Zero waste
- Water
 - Water conservation
 - Clean water initiatives
 - Stormwater or water management
- Transportation
 - Sustainable transportation
 - Electric vehicles
 - Biking initiatives/E-bikes
 - Public transit
- Food Vendor or Food Truck
 - Compostable packaging and utensils
 - Sustainable practices (such as organic, locally sourced, etc.)
 - Vegan and vegetarian options

Target Makeup

- To the best of the Subcommittee's ability, there should be an equal makeup amongst the categories of Energy, Land Management, Waste Management, Water, and Transportation.
- A designated Kid's Zone shall be included in the event exhibitor/vendor layout. A minimum of 50% exhibitors and vendors shall include a kid friendly educational component to their booth.

Vendor/Exhibitor Booth Pricing

Exhibitors are not charged a fee however a fee for vendors can be considered by the Subcommittee.

Amenities for Attendees

Restrooms and a place to refill water bottles and/or drinking water foundation shall be included within the HEF event layout. The Information Tent shall include a first aid kit for event participants. Trash and recycling receptacles are provided from Hendersonville's Public Works Department.

Amenities for Exhibitors/Vendors

Electricity is provided to exhibitors and vendors if specifically requested in the Exhibitor/Vendor Form. Trash and recycling receptacles will be provided for event attendees, however exhibitors and vendors should bring their own disposal bins if needed.

Vendor/Exhibitor Eligibility and Selection

Vendors/exhibitors must meet the following criteria:

- Exhibitors will engage the public with an activity, demonstration, or educational component
- Vendors will only sell environmentally friendly products approved by the event Subcommittee.
- Exhibitors and vendors must comply with all event rules and guidelines

Food/beverage vendors must meet the following criteria:

- Food and beverage vendors may not use plastic or styrofoam in any area of the HEF event space. Please note Bioplastic materials may be used as long as they are certified compostable products, suitable for residential composting.
- Food and beverage vendors must compost any applicable food scraps or recyclable paper product waste (buckets to collect food scraps and composting guidelines will be provided by the ESB)
- Food and beverage vendors must comply with all event rules and guidelines
- Mobile Food Units must submit a copy of their latest inspection as well as a copy of their permit from the Henderson County Health Department. Inspection grades must be 90 or above.
- Prepackaged Foods must come from a NCDA inspected kitchen and cannot be tampered with in any way after leaving the certified kitchen or at market.
- Cooking Demos are permitted without additional licensing, but payment cannot be accepted for food prepared during a demo.

- Tent Stand Cooking is not allowed unless a Temporary Tent Stand permit has been obtained from the Henderson County Health Department 15 days in advance.

All vendors/exhibitors

1. Vendors are individually responsible for setup, cleanup and safe operation of their space.
2. Vendors/exhibitors will help promote Earth Fest via their own social media and/or word-of-mouth
3. Vendors must be unloaded, with their vehicle out of the festival area no later than 9 a.m., and be set up and ready to sell/educate no later than 9:30 a.m. Vendors may not begin breakdown until 3:30 p.m., even if they are sold out.
4. Vehicles are not allowed into the festival for breakdown until all attendees have vacated the premises.
5. Exhibitor booths are 10 ft. by 10 ft. and exhibitors are required to provide their own tent, table, and chairs (unless other arrangements have been made with the subcommittee).
Tent weights are mandatory (minimum 5 lbs per tent leg)
6. Generators are not permitted. Quiet, battery-operated items are permitted (such as portable battery devices, battery-operated string lights, etc.)
7. *All vendors are responsible for their own trash in and around their booth area.* This is an Earth Day event, so let's all pitch in and do our part to leave the block free of litter. All items must be taken at the end of the event
8. EarthFest is a rain or shine event. Vendors/exhibitors are expected to be prepared for predictable weather circumstances (heat, chill, rain, wind). The ESB reserves the right to cancel the festival due to dangerous weather conditions and will notify vendors/exhibitors in that event within a reasonable period. The ESB will strive to announce a cancellation 48 hours in advance of the scheduled festival, though this time frame may not always be possible in weather-related scenarios.
9. Vendor/exhibitor pets are not allowed at the event.
10. Vendors/exhibitors must wear shoes and a shirt (pants should go without saying).
11. There is no tobacco use allowed inside the festival, including vape, chew and tobacco products of any kind.
12. Booth spaces may not be sublet.
13. Vendors must use truthful and accurate descriptors (sustainable, local, organic, sugar free, natural, etc.) to market their products. The ESB reserves the right to compel changes to questionable marketing claims.

14. The ESB requires that all vendors/exhibitors comply with standards of professionalism that promote open communication, mutual respect, and the best interest of the festival. Disruptive actions or remarks that undermine the shared success of any or all vendors/exhibitors are unprofessional and unacceptable. Hate speech and verbal harassment are examples of unacceptable behavior.
15. The ESB is not responsible for vendors in violation of licenses, permits, certifications, inspections, or sales taxes.
16. Vendors are responsible for their own personal and product liability insurance.
17. For any emergency or disturbance, call 911. Local authorities will be on standby
18. Pricing for all sale items must be listed clearly and legibly (this is a federal law).
19. HEF vendors and exhibitors must follow the same parking rules specified by the City (<https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/parking>)

Violations

Vendors/exhibitors must abide by all festival policies, rules and responsibilities outlined in this document and the event application.

Violations will be brought to the attention of the vendor/exhibitor by the ESB in the form of a written first warning with these guidelines attached. A second violation will result in a second written reminder and a one-year suspension of participation in any ESB-sponsored events, including EarthFest.

Severe or repeated violations may result in the vendor/exhibitor being barred immediately from further event participation.

Vendor/exhibitor grievances and concerns should be put in writing, include a clear and specific description of the violation, and given/sent to the ESB EarthFest Chair, Co-Chair, and Vendor/Exhibitor Coordinator. Violations of the event rules and all grievances are resolved by the EarthFest Subcommittee.